

THE LIGUORIAN

In the Service of

OUR MOTHER OF PERPETUAL HELP

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THE LIGUORIAN

*A Popular Monthly Magazine According to the Spirit of St. Alphonsus Liguori
Devoted to the Growth of Catholic Belief and Practice*

VOL. XVII

JUNE, 1929

No. 6

Fancies

Where do you lead me, Fancy, fickle and proud,
willy-nilly?

See, on a slender stem, a gossamer wisp of cloud—
An Easter Lily.

Yonder a dark blue sea, afar a bluer rim,
Heaving, hollowing,
White birds that, riding a green wave, scream and skim,
A white wave following—

White thoughts that lull all agonized heart-achings
To a white peace,
Ride hope's green wave, and to life's storm tide-breakings
Bring surcease—

A tripled bladed spear of meadow grasses,
Low on the sod,
Aloft, against the blue, one white cloud passes—
A dream of God.

—Cathal O'Byrne.

Father Tim Casey

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF ST. FRANCIS

C. D. McENNIRY, C. Ss. R.

The vast Church and Monastery of San Francesco, clinging to the side of the Mountain of Assisi, massive and durable as the rock itself, had a strong appeal for Lawrence Dwyer.

"Aw, come on, Father Tim," he pleaded, "let us go and see it now while we are in the proper mood to appreciate it."

But Father Casey was inexorable.

"No, Lawrence," he replied, "we must do this thing right. We are walking the footsteps of St. Francis, and surely we do not want to walk backwards. That is the place where he was buried, and therefore we shall leave that place for the last. We have seen the spot, here in the city, where he was born; we have visited San Damiano, just outside the walls, where God's voice called him to the great work; now we shall go down there on the plain, where he and his first companions began the Franciscan Order."

Accordingly down they went until they came to a great church near the railway station, called St. Mary of the Angels.

"What's this—a witch and her caldron?" Dwyer pointed to a stooped, shriveled old woman sitting on the ground, a pot of burning coals on one side of her, a black grimy basket on the other.

"Oh, you see that everywhere. That is the Italian equivalent for hot buttered popcorn. The good woman roasts chestnuts and sells them to you right off the fire."

"I am willing to try anything once." And he invested two cents in her black and ugly but savory wares.

While munching the sweet, mealy chestnuts, Dwyer looked up at the high wall. "You promised," he said, "to bring me to the little church where St. Francis began his Order. How did you get the idea that this mountain of masonry is little."

"Pazienza!" was all the priest replied. He drew back the heavy leather mat, which is hung over the entrance of an Italian church whenever the wood door is open. Dwyer entered, and there, in the middle of this vast basilica, he saw a tiny church built of rough field stones and mortar.

"There," said the priest, "is the tiny church where St. Francis and his first companions began the Franciscan Order. The spot is sacred; they have never disturbed it. That is the Church of the Porziuncola, the Church with the Little Field, and this great basilica, which they have since erected over it, is the Church of St. Mary of the Angels."

"I did not know Porziuncola was a church; I thought it was an indulgence."

"It is both. St. Francis obtained from the Pope the privilege of a plenary indulgence for every visit to this little church on the first day of August, the Feast of St. Peter in Chains. Vast multitudes from all the neighboring towns and villages flock here every year to gain these rich indulgences. The Franciscans, who carried the faith to far-off countries, regretted that their people could not share in those indulgences, and so the Pope extended this indulgence to the whole world. In every diocese there are certain churches where, on the first of August, you can gain the same indulgences as if you came here to the little Church of the Porziuncola."

"How can we know which churches have this privilege?"

"By listening to the announcements at Mass the Sunday before," said Father Casey.

"This, then, is the cradle of the great Franciscan Order," said Dwyer after they had knelt for some time in prayer and meditation.

"Yes," Father Casey replied. "Here they met at night to chant the divine office; here they gave long hours to prayer; here they strove with all their might to learn to appreciate the greatness and goodness of God; here they gained the grace necessary to perform the stupendous task Heaven had set before them."

"Where was their monastery?"

"Many claim their first real monastery was not here but at La Celle, the Place of the Cells, just outside Cortona. And, by the way, here comes the train that will take us there."

To reach the station they took a short cut through the garden. On the way they passed a bed of the famous thornless roses.

"One winter night, when the Saint was sorely tempted," Father Casey explained, "he came out and rolled about in a patch of wild rose briars until the leaves were spotted with his blood. From that day to this, the roses grow without thorns, and, as you see, the green leaves are spotted with red."

On the way to Cortona, Father Casey pointed out in the distance Gubbio, where Francis had made the compact with Brother Wolf, and La Verna, where he had received the stigmata—hands and feet and side had been miraculously pierced like those of his beloved Redeemer. Thereupon the priest settled down to recite his breviary, warning his young friend not to dare interrupt him until they should reach at their destination.

Dwyer failed but once. That was when the train rounded a curve and suddenly brought them in sight of a wonderful blue lake, set in a frame of green fields and fortress-crowned hills.

"Trasimeno," Father Casey replied in answer to his impetuous inquiry. "Lake Trasimeno, where the invading army of Hannibal met the Roman defenders in a world famed battle."

"Here is where they clashed," cried Dwyer excitedly; "these peaceful valleys resounded with the shouts of the combatants and the blows of sword and spear and battleaxe upon helmet and shield. Tell me all about it, Padre."

"Some other time, Larry; some other time. We are not now walking in the footsteps of Hannibal."

Like Assisi, Cortona tops the mountain, while the railroad, which serves it, passes at some distance through the valley below. Our travellers made all possible speed up the winding road from the station to the town. Their only stop was a brief visit to the tomb of that extraordinary penitent, St. Margaret of Cortona. She too is a daughter of St. Francis, having belonged to the Third Order. The church where she rests stands beside the old fortress on the mountain top, on the very spot where once stood the little hut in which she lived. After all these centuries her body can be seen still incorrupt.

A fine rain was falling and the early twilight coming on when they began the descent of the opposite side of the hill towards Le Celle. At each turn the narrow slippery road became more steep and dangerous. Presently they stopped before the stone wall encircling the convent grounds. The heavy gate had been already closed and bolted for the night; no bell or knocker was there to summon the porter. However the driver, familiar with the location, led them down a footpath skirting the ledge, and through a little wicket gate into the monks' property. There they beheld the spot where Francis, with his own hands, had built his cell. It is on the slope of a steep, pine-covered ravine, beside

a wild mountain torrent. Except for the sighing of the wind through the pine trees, the splashing of the stream, and the patter of the rain on the dry grass, not a sound could be heard. No living thing was visible. With the instinct of the poet and the mystic, Francis had singled out this secluded retreat, where everything speaks to the soul of God. When four of the Brethren came to share his solitude, they extended the walls of his cell far enough to make four cells for themselves, and thus the first Franciscan monastery was begun. Today it has grown to a building of considerable size, but always in strict conformity with the poverty of its origin. The Saint's cell has been scrupulously preserved just as he left it seven hundred years ago when he set out on his last journey back to Assisi to die.

A kindly monk met our visitors at the door and showed them through the historic place. The stamp of extreme poverty was everywhere. Rooms and corridors were damp and cold, for even in mid-winter they renounce the comfort of a fire. Here and there the darkness was broken by a dim taper struggling with the gloom. Silent novices pattered about in their bare, sandaled feet, peace and joy written on their clean, strong young faces.

"Where do these young men get the courage to leave happy homes and all the comforts and pleasures of the modern world to come and lead such a heroic life?" Dwyer asked.

"Perhaps from this," said the monk. He led them into the cell of St. Francis. One side is built up of stones, the other side dug into the cliff. The floor is the bare ground. The bed, upon which the Saint took his scanty rest, is a narrow ledge of rock running the full length of the tiny cell. "Every day," he continued, "the novices come into this cell and reflect on the words of Our Loving Redeemer: 'Be not solicitous what you shall eat . . . Sell what thou hast and give to the poor . . . If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.' Here they have a clear object lesson teaching that these counsels can be carried out to the letter and that, when carried out to the letter, they bring, not gloom and despondency, but perfect joy."

* * *

"Now at last," said Father Casey, when, after the excursion to Le Celle, they found themselves back in the City of Assisi, "we shall see that big Church and Monastery of San Francesco you have been pestering me about."

They had dismissed the driver and were proceeding on foot. At one point the street skirted the edge of the cliff and gave a broad view of the plain below. They leaned upon the retaining wall and gazed in silence at the entrancing scene. The priest was the first to speak.

"St. Francis, who began his Order with two companions down there in the Little field, lived to see that entire plain covered with the tents of the Franciscans who had come in thousands to assist at the second General Chapter of the Order. So long as his poor wounded feet could carry him, he travelled far and wide 'repairing the House of God which was falling into ruin,' begging people to be sensible, to do the only thing worth while, to love God who had so loved them. At the age of forty-five, worn out by penance and labor, he retired to the Porziuncola to die. He asked to be carried out where he could look up here and see Assisi, the city of his birth, the city he so fondly loved. Weeping with tenderness, he blessed it; then he lay on the bare ground, clothed in an old garment borrowed from one of his companions, and thus, in extreme poverty, he died.

"One who understood, as Francis did, the infinite purity and holiness of God, could not fail to have the keenest appreciation of his own unworthiness and nothingness; that is why he asked to be buried in the most dishonorable spot, the place of public execution, the 'Hilltop of Hell.' They could not refuse his dying request, but first they prepared a fitting tomb. The tomb they built for their Poverello is this immense church and monastery. Let us enter here where Popes and kings, poets, generals, and statesmen have come to do honor to the son of Peter Bernardone."

* * *

After a night spent within these venerable walls, and with hearts stirred to their deepest depths, Father Casey celebrated Holy Mass and Lawrence Dwyer received Communion at the very grave of the little poor man of Assisi.

If I but touch His vesture's hem
I shall be healed and strong and free;
Thou wert His vesture, Mary;—them
His virtue heals that cling to thee!

—*Aubrey de Vere.*

Etchings From Life

D. F. MILLER, C.Ss.R.

A rich man once paid a visit to a Home for the Aged that was in the care of the Little Sisters of the Poor. The Mother Superioress showed him through every part of the house; brought him in the presence of her old and feeble charges; introduced him to her sick and weak-minded and childish patients; gave him, in short, a glimpse of every phase of the divine work of charity performed by the Sisters. The rich man seemed to be struck very much by what he saw; so much so, that when he came to take his leave, he said to the Mother Superioress:

"Mother, I would not do the work you do for a million dollars a year!"

With an understanding smile the old Sister turned and answered him:

"Sir, neither would I. No—not for all the money in the world. I do it for God!"

* * *

Anyone who, like the rich man, has an opportunity to behold the amount and kind of work done by these ministers of divine charity, cannot but come to the forcible conclusion: This work could be inspired—only by God! It is the sublime argument for the Catholic Faith that is drawn from its power over the human will; that will, seated in a body of flesh and blood, drawn to the things of earth as the metal to the magnet, longing for ease and comfort and pleasure as it longs for life itself; repelled by disease and filth and pain and labor as virtue shrinks from the breath of sin,—that will is made by the power of God and His revealed doctrine of charity and love to embrace and hold to itself in affection and devotion, what all the world would call the meanest, the lowliest, the most disagreeable and loathsome things! The same God Who inspired the martyrs with faith and courage to embrace all the horrors the perverted minds of men could invent, is at work here; He and He alone could infuse the infinite patience, the heavenly kindness, the sublime charity into the human hearts of the Little Sisters of the Poor, that makes it possible for them to take to their breasts the outcasts of a heartless world!

When I was going through one of the Homes of the Little Sisters of the Poor, a young Irish Sister escorted me into the Infirmary ward that I might bless an old patient there. It was just after Mass in the morning. The unpleasant odors from the breath of the many persons who had slept there the night before still lingered around the room of dishevelled bed-clothes. Back in one corner an old, old lady, worn and shrivelled away to a tiny shadow, lay lost in the folds of the blankets that covered her. Her weakness made it impossible for her to move; her voice was barely able to articulate a thin, indistinct echo of sound. Only with her eyes,—bright, blue eyes, strangely contrasting with the wrinkled, pallid flesh of the face in which they were set, did she seem to retain her grasp and hold on the things of earth. There was nothing, naturally speaking, in the weazened little body to attract a human being; aside from the impulse of protection for her helplessness, no feelings of spontaneous warmth drew you to her. Rather, on the contrary, human nature had to admit a surge of repulsion. The disagreeable atmosphere of the room, the untidy array of bedclothes as the old people had left them, and the condition of helpless senility to which the old lady had been brought—all these combined to grate on, rather than soothe the senses . . .

But the senses had no governance over the young Irish Sister. She seemed to see before her something dear and priceless; something that awakened all her love and tenderness. It was faith that ruled her, and taught her senses what to love and cherish and be drawn to—and crushed her human motions of repulsion . . . At any rate, she sat down on the bed beside the little patient and took her in her arms. There was gladness and joy,—almost, I might say, mirth—in her face and voice as she whispered her blessed words of faith and cheer into the ear of her fast-fading little charge.

"Mother is going to see God pretty soon and be happy with Him, isn't she?" she said, but the words seem cold and harsh here on paper, uncharged with the sublime tenderness and meaning the young Sister gave them. "And Mother is going to remember the Father who blessed her this morning, when she sees God . . ."—the old head nodded in affirmation and faith. "Soon—soon—Mother is going home to God!" . . . The warm young lips kissed the yellow old cheek . . .

I went out of that room knowing the true meaning and glory of the Catholic Faith. And I felt that I had approached close—very, very close to the throne of God!

Down on the basement floor of the Home we visited the kitchen, where a young Novice, small, frail and pretty, turned from a group of ridiculously large pots of steaming vituals to greet us and kneel for a blessing. It is almost impossible to say how completely out of place this slip of a girl seemed in the large kitchen of the institution; she seemed lost among the massive tables and stoves and cupboards around her. Her cheeks were flushed and red;—was it from the heat of the stove, or from the faith-born joy of her life and calling? I do not know, but I do know she was smiling and cheerful, as though her time was spent in the gayest of companies. I am not sure either that her time was not spent thus; they say the angels haunt these charitable institutions, and God Himself said something about—"What you do for these—you do for me!"

I just wondered, there in that hot, dim, crowded, "smelly" kitchen, what some good old, dyed-in-the-wool, worldly-minded pleasure-seeker would have thought or said, could he or she have viewed that fresh young presence in those surroundings. The first reaction would most likely have been one of indignation, as if to say: "Who has forced this young thing into such slavery?" According to all known principles and experience, such a person could not imagine anyone voluntarily choosing such a life; therefore force must have been brought to bear. Within his or her own mind none but the most selfish conceptions and ideals rule and guide; therefore in the minds of others only such can be imagined as having power or influence. So, could such a worldly minded person have seen, and would they have admitted the wonder of the young Novice's sacrifice, it would have been a lesson of infinite value! But I fear they could not see it—and would not admit it if they did!

* * *

We went into the men's refectory, where the aged and feeble poor sat around narrow tables that skirted the four walls of the room, eating breakfast. They presented a motley appearance; some bald, some thinly gray, some white, according as the years and their trials had seen fit to impress their marks. Some with drawn, pinched, wrinkled faces, as of parchment crumpled in the hand and then opened again; some with smooth, shiny, almost youthful-looking faces, if it were not for the unhealthy flush that age had brought to them; some with beaming, smiling, contented faces, as though they had found out in age

secrets that youth had never told them;—all these and many more kinds of faces greeted us as we entered the room. In an adjoining compartment were what might be called the “specials.” One old man in a wheelchair—most likely a paralytic. Another seated on a special bench with crutches beside him—a crippled and hunch-backed wreck. A seventy year old infant was placed in a high-chair, with a bib under his chin and a large spoon held tightly in his fist—a poor old imbecile, having, as the Sister told me, the mentality of a two-year-old baby. These and others occupied the compartment. The Sisters had doled out mush and bread and coffee, and the men were in all stages of partaking of their breakfast fare.

I looked around at the little home-circle over which the Sisters presided. I thought of other home-circles. I thought of happy mothers, seated in the midst of happy, bright-faced, growing children; embracing and kissing them, living for them, loving them only,—finding joy and happiness sufficient to overflow their hearts, in the thought and care of their children . . . No such children for these women, these Sisters, these Mothers. Theirs are the old, the feeble, the lame, the helpless, the outcasts, the homeless. But somehow they have the same overflowing love and motherly tenderness that impels every natural mother to give her life for her children. Although their children are not bright-faced and loving little ones, but squeamish, puling, hard-to-please, troublesome old people, they care for them as they would for their own flesh and blood! . . .

Some day in heaven, perhaps, we shall see and realize what the work of these Sisters means. Perhaps it will come to us then in the glorious condition and reward of these Little Sisters of the Poor, “how many were the children of her who had not a husband!”

* * *

For these and many other reasons, I think I shall never forget the Little Sisters of the Poor. The place stands out boldly in my memory. A long, low, stone wall stretches along the street front, through which a picket gate admits you to the short walk that brings you to the entrance of the Home. One of the inmates, a sort of respectable-looking, heavy set individual, hard of hearing and very labored in his tread, answers your ring, and after with some seeming difficulty, grasping your message, sets out wearily to carry it to the Mother Superioress. Then from the time the good Mother greets you with her whole-

hearted, enthusiastic warmth and cordiality, until you step out of the little picket gate back onto the streets of the "world," you are led, in your journey through the halls and rooms of the Home, through a land of revelations, whose main burden and trend is the essential doctrine of the Master and the summing up of the whole law and the prophets: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart . . . and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself!"

A FLICKER OF HOPE IN MEXICO

Out of the seemingly interminable strife and chaos in Mexico resulting from existing conditions between the state and the Catholic Church, comes at last a tiny ray of hope. It is only a ray—and a ray of hope for the future—but we are glad to cling to any and every promise of better things for strife-torn Mexico. The hope is born of the words of President Portes Gil, who issued the statement that "the Mexican Government would persecute no religion, and that the Catholic clergy, when they wish, may renew the exercise of their rites with only one obligation, that they respect the laws of the land as the ministers of other denominations are doing."

Of course, there is a contradiction in his words. How can the Catholic clergy "renew the exercise of their rites" and "respect the laws of the land"—when those very laws are directly contrary to such freedom of exercise? If he means to support and enforce the laws as they are—then his words mean nothing—and Catholic freedom will gain nothing from the promise they hold out.

But the hope is contained in the measure of good-will the words imply. Surely the President sees that changes are needed in the laws to bring peace to Mexico—and his words may be but the opening to such change and revision. The Mexican hierarchy accept the statement as just such an evidence of good-will—and are following it up with repeated professions of willingness to cooperate in any honest effort for reconciliation and peace.

If you use the thought of the Last Judgment as your rudder, you will be able to weather every storm.

Scholar and Saint

PROFESSOR CONTARDO FERRINI

AUG. T. ZELLER, C.Ss.R.

We have followed Contardo Ferrini through his career as Student at various schools and universities, as Professor sought by the most important universities of Italy, as a member of the Municipal Council of Milan, as Scientist devoted to laborious researches—a career that won for him monuments in various cities.

But all this meant little to Ferrini. He looked to higher things and all through his remarkable career, he lived as a saint and touched supernatural heights. It gave him a certain aloofness from, a certain superiority above things of this world, that all felt who came in contact with him.

HUMILITY

One of his characteristics was humility. The glimpses that he got on his vacation trips, of the lives of the simple people of the country districts and the Alpine regions, filled him with a great admiration for them.

His prayers, some of which are still preserved to us, written according to his wont on bits of paper, are filled with sentiments of humility. Thus in one of his preparations for Holy Communion we read:

"Behold me before Thee! See me prostrate upon Thy altar, humbled before Thy divine Majesty. I am dust and ashes, I am wickedness and sin, I am guilt and pride, and I dare to speak to Thee, O Lord? Nay even, I dare to approach Thy table? Ah, depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man! Go, O Lord, and rest amid the glory of the angels, pure as the rays of sun;—go, and abide with Cherubim and Seraphim, who burn with an everlasting love,—go to elect souls, who find their delight in Thee,—souls who know not guilt or merit of their own,—souls whose life is sacrifice, whose hope and yearning Thou art! How shall I dare to open my lips to receive Thy immaculate body? How shall I be able to receive Thee without trembling with fear: since You demand a heart pure and contrite, humbled and nurtured in sacrifice, and I can bring Thee only a heart vain and flighty, full of a thousand stains, shirking sacrifice and cold in love!"

We are face to face here with that humility that inspired a St.

Aloysius—that made him see the slightest blemish with some of the infinite justice of God. But, like the humility of the saints, his is shot through with all the deeper trust in God.

"But what will happen to me, if Thou come not?" he continues; "Oh, I will go to receive Thee, because Thou art my Physician, my Good Shepherd, my tender and affectionate friend, my indulgent Father. I think, O my Jesus, of an hour of unspeakable suffering—of Blood that fell lavishly,—of a Cross raised on high—of a moment of fruitful Redemption! Well then, O Jesus, I have sinned; well then, O Jesus may it be done unto me according to Thy mercy!"

It is almost astonishing to see the vividness of faith, the warmth of love, the depth of humility and the completeness of the confidence that throbs in these prayers of his scattered through his various spiritual writings.

He knew what he was doing in seeking humility. He realized that it is not weakness. On the contrary:

"O, let my firm resolution today be humility of life!" he writes. "Humility is strength—humility is power. It is power and strength in the face of men, because secure in the favor of God: John (The Baptist), who considered himself unworthy to loose the latchet of Christ's shoes, ascends the steps of the throne of a shameful king and pronounces the courageous and austere word: *Non licet*—it is not allowed. Humility is strength and power before God: Abraham presents himself before God saying: Behold I speak to God and am dust and ashes. And Abraham obtained his request."

And he lived this humility. One of the professors of the University of Messina said of him: "Modesty made him dissimulate and hide his merits even from those of his own family."

"He never spoke of himself, neither good nor evil," said a priest who knew him, "never put himself forward. His appearance was such that no one would ever have suspected his knowledge or his virtue. I myself, was astonished to find how highly he was esteemed in the scientific world, when after his death I read the accounts of him in the papers."

"If Contardo Ferrini had one fault," said Filippo Sesso, who knew him long and well, "it was his excessive modesty."

His sister tells that "he received many letters of congratulations for his scientific works, but he always hid them."

If this humility was born of Faith, it was also inspired by Science. "The more a man steepes himself in study, the more he feels his own unworthiness," he used to say.

AT PRAYER

We have already referred to his habits of prayer. A French writer, P. Gauderon, says of his prayers:

"We cannot help being surprised when we compare a page of law, written by him in a manner so sober, so precise, with the pages full of enthusiasm in which he speaks of the union with God—pages that not even the greatest mystics would disown . . . But," he continues, "the contrast is only apparent. It only goes to show that Science and Love of God can exist freely in the same soul."

As the author of his life notes, if we look deeper into the piety of Ferrini, the apparent contradiction vanishes at once—for in it, there is no sentimentalism—but only the severest logic: Ferrini realized clearly *why* we are here on this earth. Man is a finite being striving toward the infinite: The infinite is God—therefore man is intelligence, will, energy, striving toward God. This was the foundation, in his own words, of his piety.

If his habits of prayer, in the midst of his scientific labors and professorial duties surprise us, it is only in his ideas of meditation that we get a full idea of the heights of spirituality he reached.

THE PRAYER OF A SCHOLAR

Writing about meditation, in comparison with vocal prayer, Ferrini says: "Still higher and more intimate is another form of prayer, which is likewise a necessity of the just soul. Without it the day would seem desecrated and profane, without it, it would not find that sweet perfume, of piety which forms its accustomed delight."

"Yes the tongue is silent, but the mind rises completely to God and meditates His sublime truth. Oh, wonderful trysts of man with God! Oh the sweet embraces of the Creator with the Creature! Oh the ineffable elevations of the human spirit! What has the world to compare with these purest joys of heaven, with these rays of eternal glory? With what eagerness we rise at early morn to hasten to this feast of holy thoughts. Now it is the fervor, the beauty, the holiness of God; again it is the hope of a supreme day; now it is the humiliation of the Son of God made man to live among us, full of goodness and truth; again it is the sorrowful mystery of Golgotha or the joy of the Eucharistic Banquet.

"Oh how sweet is the Lord to those who fear Him? What will I say then to those that love Him? With the Incarnation of the Word the tenderness of God for men is poured out and the just soul is, in a most true and sublime sense, espoused to Christ. Whence it is that St. Paul would have wished to offer the Christians as a chaste generation to Christ—and even the prophecies speak of this heavenly espousal, and in the Gospels souls are the virgins that go to meet their spouse. And thus we hear in holy ecstasy the loving proposals of God and exulting we repeat the canticle of Divine love."

Such was Ferrini's morning meditation. With the sound of the Angelus he cut it short only to hasten to Mass and Communion. There in the shadows of the church, he knelt immovable, with folded hands and head bent down, his soul united to God.

One of his resolutions found in his rule of life is very significant: "Every hour," he resolved, "I shall, if possible, say a Hail Mary and will make an act of spiritual communion."

It is impossible to make more than a passing reference here to his habit of weekly confession, daily visits to the Blessed Sacrament, his hidden mortifications always under the guidance of his confessor, of his love for poverty that he might the more easily give to the poor.

THE CHARITY OF A SCHOLAR

On the memorial tablet erected to Ferrini at the University of Pavia, three words are recorded that are characteristic of the man—Simple, Austere, Pious.

The great student of Roman law was most simple in his habits and requirements. His room was fitted out as austere as that of a monk. He dressed most simply and as cheaply as possible. He never bargained about any of his books but took what publishers gave him.

In fact he was detached—uninterested in things of this world. And this not by temperament but by resolve.

"I will love holy poverty," was his resolution, "and will practice it by respect for the poor, by taking every loss gladly, in my dress and in regard to superfluities."

What he thus saved on himself was used in charity for others. But so well concealed were these kindnesses of his that they were scarcely known till after his death. Then it was that those who had been benefited came to mourn his loss.

Most of this charity was done in connection with his work as a

member of the St. Vincent de Paul Society. He became acquainted with this work at the University of Berlin, where working beside men like Windhorst, and Westermayer, the former the renowned Parliamentarian, the latter a distinguished Professor, he developed an enthusiasm that never left him. It was noticed that he even dressed more poorly himself when he made his visits to the poor so that he might seem to be on their own level.

Children had a special attraction for him.

HUMOR AND HOLINESS

It was probably at the University of Berlin that Contardo Ferrini took the resolve to remain single in order to devote himself entirely to the service of God and his chosen Science. This resolve he put in the form of a vow which he conceived as a spiritual espousal with Christ. This he guarded with the greatest care, sacredness, and gladness.

People often wondered why he did not marry and mothers with marriageable daughters often forced their girls upon his attention.

One held up before him the rich dowry her daughter would be able to bring him.

"Couldn't I just marry the dowry?" asked Ferrini.

Another recounted to him, as a bait, the estates a certain young lady would inherit:

"Upon the death of her father, so much . . . On the death of her mother so much . . . On the death of her uncle, so much . . .," she went on.

"Oh, said Ferrini," what a heap of corpses!"

Thus playfully rejecting all offers, he guarded his holy secret and kept his high resolve.

"I WILL DIE GLADLY BECAUSE GOD IS MERCIFUL"

This sentence was written by Ferrini himself, and it is characteristic of the man.

His life was so well balanced—God, his family, his students, his fellow-men, the poor;—every duty was so conscientiously fulfilled: work, recreation, prayer,—each had its place; piety, austerity, cheerfulness, humor, untiring diligence, thoughtfulness of others, all were exemplified in his daily life.

He had lived. And though he was only 43 when the angel of death came, he might have said as he looked back on his life with satisfaction: "It is consummated."

But he builded not on all this; he looked to God, whom he had ever tried to serve faithfully: "I will die gladly because God is merciful," he said.

In April, 1900, he was seized with a severe fever—the doctor found evidence of an affection of the heart. This was the first warning. The doctors ordered him to avoid fatiguing work. He continued his professorial duties.

On October 4, 1902, with his father, Prof. Rinaldo Ferrini, he made the ascent of Mt. Rosa, near Suna, where the family home was. On their return Contardo complained of fever. Next day was Sunday; as it rained, his mother tried to induce him to absent himself from Mass. Contardo would not listen. He went to Mass and Communion. It was his last Communion. That evening when they called him for supper, they found him in his room unconscious.

The doctors were not alarmed; but by the time the priest came with Viaticum he was in delirium from fever. Thus he remained for about two weeks, with lucid spells between.

"How are you?" somebody asked him during such a spell.

"Oh," he replied, "one feels so good near to God."

At other times he said:

"The bell is ringing for Mass—Have I done my duty?"

On Saturday Oct. 17, calmly and serenely he passed away.

"A day will come," he wrote in his novena for Christmas, "when we shall say: it is consummated,—and the Angels will close our eyes in sweet peace."

It was verified now.

"The saint is dead," said the people when they heard of it. The universities of Italy sounded the praises of the distinguished professor and raised monuments to him; the learned world deplored the loss at so early an age, of Italy's greatest student of Roman Law. All were loud in their praises. All who knew him admired his sterling character. And somehow there came to all lips spontaneously the words:

"Contardo Ferrini is a Saint."

(THE END)

An Anniversary

THIRTY YEARS IN THE BELGIAN CONGO. 1899-1929

Q. B. DENGES, C.Ss.R.

Some thirty years ago, in February, 1899, three priests and two brothers, members of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, bade adieu to their native Belgium and boarded the ship that was to carry them to other scenes and climes in Africa. Since that memorable day of March 1, 1899, when the little band of Belgian Redemptorists established themselves at Matadi in the Belgian Congo, the spiritual sons of St. Alphonsus, laboring untiringly and zealously in their new field of activity, have reaped no small harvest of souls for the Kingdom of Christ. Only a little more than a year ago a writer in the London *Tablet* did not hesitate to single out the Redemptorist Prefecture of Matadi as one of the foremost Congo Mission fields.

Now that this unpretentious mission enterprise—the first in Africa to be entrusted to the Congregation founded by St. Alphonsus—is rounding out its thirtieth birthday, it may be interesting and even enjoyable to look back at the humble beginnings, comparable indeed to the mustard seed of the Gospels, and observe how the tiny seed took deep root and gradually has grown into a vigorous, sturdy tree, marvelously rich in fruits of salvation.

PREPARING THE SOIL FOR THE SEED

One of the first questions that may arise regarding the Redemptorist Mission in the Congo is this: How did the sons of St. Alphonsus ever get there? If we should hear some one casually reply that the falls and rapids in the Congo River were responsible for bringing the Belgian Redemptorists into this territory, we would naturally shrug our shoulders and remain about as enlightened as before. But strange as it may appear, Stanley Falls and the rapids, situated about 200 miles from the mouth of the great river, had quite a bit to do with shaping the course of events that eventually led to the establishment of the Redemptorists in the Congo. Here is the story in brief.

As it is well known, the gigantic Congo River System with its thousands of miles of navigable waterways, offers a ready means of communication and commerce far into the heart of Africa. Unfortunately, however, there are dangerous rapids and falls between Leopoldville and

Matadi (situated on the river about 100 miles from its mouth), thus blocking all direct navigation between the sea and the interior of the country. To overcome this difficulty and connect the extensive avenues of traffic with the ocean, the Belgian Government in 1888 commissioned a certain engineer named Albert Thys to construct a railroad between the two cities just mentioned, in this way obviating the dangers of the rapids. The preliminary plans were carefully drawn up and the work was soon to commence. But where could suitable laborers be obtained for the project? It was a question of laying out about 270 miles of railroad through dense, virgin forests, over thundering mountain torrents, and across steep hills, and all under a tropical sun in the midst of an uncivilized country. After mature consideration it was decided to employ the civilized natives of Senegal, a colony of French West Africa. The greater number of the prospective railroad builders were Catholics, having been taught the Faith many years back by the Holy Ghost Fathers. These hardy natives were willing to put their shoulder to the wheel, but under one condition: some priests must be appointed to live with them in their new home as long as the work lasted. At first their request was ignored; but as they held out to their condition and their services were so badly needed, it was deemed expedient to give them what they desired.

The Bishop of Ghent, Mgr. Stillemans, was approached; he appealed to his clergy and without delay six priests volunteered to go to the Belgian Congo with the Senegal workmen. When the arduous labors were finally completed, many of the builders, finding ready employment on the new railroad, decided to remain. But by this time Mgr. Stillemans needed the services of his six priests. Should he recall them, who would minister to the spiritual wants of the Senegal Catholics in the Congo? It was at this critical juncture that the Belgian Redemptorists came to the rescue; they willingly accepted the offer to take a part in the glorious work of evangelizing the Belgian Congo.

PLANTING THE SEED

We have seen above how in February, 1899, the first small group of Redemptorists set out for their new mission in the Congo. In the beginning their ministrations were limited to the city of Matadi and the neighboring districts. As new recruits from time to time increased their ranks they gradually widened out their orbit of apostolic work. Directing their attention at first to the employees of the Matadi-Leopold-

ville Railroad, they soon pushed their way far north and south of the 270 miles of track, visiting the natives in their huts, winning their goodwill and confidence, baptizing dying infants, and announcing as best they could the Glad Tidings of man's Redemption. Humble chapels and schools and dispensaries soon gladdened the face of the land as tokens of the stability and permanence of the results achieved. As early as Dec. 11, 1901, the promising condition of the few Redemptorist houses in the new mission warranted their establishment into the Vice-Province of the Congo.

But it was by no means all easy sailing. There were shoals and reefs in abundance, and more than once terrible storms that threatened the very existence of the frail barque. Among the difficulties we may mention the task of learning several native dialects, about as inviting as Chinese, and perhaps as seemingly impossible. Then there were the prevalent vices and traits of character found among the pagan population that went a long way to hinder the spread of the Gospel. For example, Father Dubar, C.Ss.R., writing in 1911, describes the natives in the Matadi-Leopoldville district as "capricious, crafty, given to flattery and insincerity, idlers, liars, and above all, gluttons." It would only be fair to suggest that Father Dubar was not quoting from some Encyclopedia; his knowledge was from a source a little more personal and "experimental." Further on he continues: "The great evil we must combat here is polygamy. One husband will 'keep' five or six wives and treat them much like beasts of burden, using a club or long knife to drive them to work. Children are objects of commerce, not of love; they are raised and sold as if they were beasts." Besides this, another obstacle that stood in the way of the onward march of Christ's Cross was the diabolical medicine-man with his almost magical hold on the benighted natives. At times he spread abroad the vilest calumnies about the missionaries and even resorted to violence in his fanatical opposition to the light that makes men free. Surely it was no easy task to raise a people steeped in moral degradation that was appalling; nor was it any less difficult to overthrow all that infernal devil-worship with its practice of the black arts and the grossest superstitions and set upon the ruins of the idols the Church of the living God.

THE GROWING TREE BEARS FRUIT

The missionaries were never daunted by the perils and hardships encountered. What else are obstacles but things to be overcome? Be-

fore the ennobling, civilizing influence of the Faith, the fetishes began to sway on their swaying pedestals and crumble to pieces, as in the legend, the idols of Egypt fell as the Holy Child passed by. Domestic slavery gradually lost ground and the dark clouds of error receded as the Sun of Justice arose, with health in his wings.

Not to overburden the reader with a formidable array of figures, we shall select at random the following statistics of the years 1909 and 1910 to give some idea of the average yearly gains made by the Redemptorists in their Belgian Congo Mission:

	1909	1910
Baptisms of adults.....	990	1,458
Baptisms of infants.....	251	512
Communions	72,640	109,006
Christians (natives)	3,720	4,612
Catechumens	10,043	11,734
Christian Marriages	138	165
Catechists	167	188

These few figures, representative of the average yearly work and progress, will show that the missionaries' labors have not been in vain. In 1911 there were 16 elementary schools and three higher-graded schools in operation with 436 children in attendance; there were 338 orphans in the houses erected for this purpose; and about 450 patients in the dispensaries and hospitals. So prospering was the Redemptorist mission in the Congo at this time that the Holy See thought it opportune to make it a Prefecture Apostolic. Accordingly on the vigil of the Feast of St. Alphonsus, August 1, 1911, Pope Pius X appointed the Rev. Joseph Heintz, C.Ss.R., as the first Prefect Apostolic of Matadi. For many years as Vice Provincial this truly apostolic man had been giving his best to the mission; and today, after more than 25 years of unflagging zeal he still stands at the helm, the most revered missionary in all that district.

Between 1910 and 1927 the Redemptorists in the Congo received approximately 17,000 converts into the Fold of Christ. At the present time there are about 33 Fathers and 21 Brothers in the 10 houses of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer in the Belgian Congo. According to a recent report, the number of conversions in one year reached 1,915. That same year 1,161 children were also baptized; Confessions were well over 72,000; there were 400 Christian marriages;

the hospitals cared for 22,000 patients. And the good work still continues.

A SPECIAL FRUIT OF THE TREE

Imitating their holy Founder and Father Alphonsus, Redemptorists the world over cherish a special love for the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. The following little account will show how the spiritual sons of the great Alphonsus share their priceless treasure with the natives in the Congo. In 1922 two of the Fathers opened a new mission station in the "North Cataracts Territory." The first two years were hard; the converts were few in number. Within two more years the baptisms went over the thousand marks; today the new mission station serves about 7,000 Catholics, all converted by the two Fathers within six years. But what is to the point here is the number of Communions administered to these new converts. From October, 1927, to October, 1928, the Communions totaled 210,000. This means that the average person received the Bread of Angels three of four times each month. During Easter Week the two Fathers distributed 15,000 Communions, while on Christmas Day of the preceding year they were occupied two hours in administering the Sacrament of Love.

This short account will sufficiently demonstrate how the small seed, planted thirty years ago at Matadi, has become a deeply-rooted and vigorous tree, bearing plentiful fruits of copious redemption, and giving promise of continued fecundity for the years to come.

DAILY COMMUNION

Blessed Thomas More, even at the busiest period of his life, daily heard Holy Mass and received Holy Communion. One day some of his friends reproached him for it, telling him that on account of the great number of his occupations, he should give up that practice and devote more time to business.

"Your reasons for wanting me to stay away from Holy Communion," he answered, "are exactly the ones that cause me to go so often. My distractions are great—but it is by Holy Communion that I recollect myself. Many times a day I am tempted to sin—it is through my Communion I overcome. I have many weighty affairs to manage—and I have need of light and strength to do so well. It is in my Communion that I find all this!"

The End of the Game

JOHN R. MELVIN, C.Ss.R.

Father Dan and Father Tom are dead in China. Two weeks ago the papers first gave us the news and the Superior of our Foreign Mission Band cabled the details later. Real martyrs they are both of them. Some day maybe they'll be canonized and the rest of us left over here in prosaic America, to fill out our days in the dull drab, but none the less painful, prolonged martyrdom of hard work on home missions or in parish work or in teaching, are filled with holy envy. Well, they were bound to end up in some such way; they always were thrown into the thick of things somehow or other.

St. John in his Gospel tells us of how he and St. Peter acted, when Mary Magdalene brought them the news that somebody had taken away the Body of the Lord from the Sepulchre. They both started running full speed to the grave. Whether it was St. John's speed or youth or eagerness that lent speed to his feet, we are not prepared to say. At any rate he outdistanced St. Peter. John came first to the Sepulchre and peered in and beheld the garments lying, but would not enter. He stood aside and let Peter enter before him. Rather a reversal of their conduct during life previous to this. St. Peter was usually the more impetuous and John made the cool decision after much thought. But St. John hesitated here and reversed the usual mode of conduct. Peter was the slower but John yielded him precedence.

We are not going to try to interrupt the Gospel story. We refer to it only because, now that the full story of the end of Father Dan and Father Tom is known, I can't help thinking of Peter and John. You see Father Dan and Father Tom were like the two Apostles in many ways. Have you ever noticed how close Peter and John, despite their vastly different dispositions, were to each other? Read the Gospels and you'll find these two, Peter the impetuous, Peter somehow or other always in the limelight and John, John the calm, peaceful, quiet, innocent, docile, dependable Disciple, beloved of all, were inseparable. People do not appreciate the human side of the Gospels or they would read them more than they do. Peter in the end, as throughout life, was spectacular, John always in the background, he even formed a background for the Tragedy of Calvary. So Father Dan and Father Tom

were a second Peter and John. Yet St. John would seem to have had his moment of ambition to be first and had his mother ask Christ to give him a prominent place in the Kingdom. That made the other Apostles jealous. So you can't blame me for being jealous of Father Dan and Father Tom, especially as I was one of the trio, whom they dubbed Peter, James and John in the years we were on the same Home Mission Band. But I am like poor old St. James. Peter and John went off to convert the heathen and left him at home to take care of the faithful. So Tom and Dan went off to China and left me behind in the States. Maybe I'm mixed in my Scriptures, but I have an idea, that St. James, left behind at home, became a martyr too. So I have hopes.

But here I am musing on my martyr pals and not saying a prayer for them or getting on with my story. Well, I can't help it. I simply can't pray for them, because we sang a "Te Deum" in their honor when we got the details of their deaths. And I'm so envious of them, I can't help musing on the days when we were parts of machine, or rather since they were typical Americans, "playing on the same team," they used to say.

Still as I look back on Dan and Tom, I simply can't take them back to Apostolic days. They were so up to date, so typically healthy normal modern Americans, with a love for God, that they somehow managed to mix with the American sporting spirit, that thoughts far from Apostolic crowd in on me when I think of them.

If it were not almost irreverent not to say blasphemous after comparing Father Dan and Father Tom to two Apostles, it's a far more humble and humiliating simile I would use to describe them and their influence on each other.

Father Dan was like a high spirited race horse. A thoroughbred, yes, but high strung and erratic and temperamental. Race horses are not the most dependable animals in the world. However, since the performance of Father Dan was always good and he came out a winner in every race but one, naturally you are going to think Father Tom was probably a good jockey and was able to get the best out of Father Dan. It was only in later years that fellow priests noticed that a lot of Father Dan's success was due to the influence Father Tom exerted on him. So somebody once used that comparison of Father Dan being a race horse and Father Tom the jockey.

Father Tom laughed his own quiet thoughtful laugh, that I can hear even now with him lying dead and his bones picked bare by the buzzards or crows or whatever carrion birds they have in the mountains of China.

"You're right about Dan," said he. "He is a race horse. You know the best jockey in the world can't get anything out of the best race horse in the world when the horse isn't in a mood to give it. Earl Sande told me that one day when I was talking to him at Saratoga. You know Earl used to go to our church there. He was speaking of Zev right before the race with the famous English horse Papyrus that he afterwards beat so badly. He told me that Zev, like all other thoroughbreds, was a most peculiar animal. One day he said the famous nag would run his heart out, the next day he simply wouldn't work and far more frequently he simply didn't seem to have it in him to try or, if he did try, lacked strength or stamina or whatever it is that makes a horse eat up space in the stretch in a flying trying finish."

"Yes, Father Tom," said his friend, "but if I made as good a record in bringing home a horse or a man as winner that Sande did, I'd be perfectly content. Seems to me, Father Dan is always a winner when you are with him. Away from you he isn't a world beater. In fact, he's a failure, though he still has the stuff, he doesn't seem to be himself."

"It's better not to talk about that," said Father Tom; "it's just friendship and mutual affection and confidence that seems to make us perfect successes as a team and yet individual failures when alone."

"Nonsense," scoffed the other priest; "you were never a failure yet, and you know it, though you were never spectacular. But Dan, brilliant as he is, never succeeded at all and scored more than one failure when you weren't with him."

"Oh well," said Father Tom deprecatingly, "let's not discuss the matter. Since you want to compare Tom and Dan to a race horse and jockey, let me tell you though you are mistaken in that there is a comparison, I feel, between high-strung, sensitive, speedy Dan and myself. Sande gave me the idea, too. He told me, if the owner could always keep the thoroughbred at his best, he would be a consistent winner. But Earl Sande said neither owner nor trainer nor jockey could accomplish that. He said it sometimes happens, that a great horse conceives an attachment for some negro hostler or some scrawny scrub pony that is

put in the same stall with him. The negro 'swipe' or the scrub pony seems to keep the thoroughbred from getting nervous. Keeps the race horse always in a good mood. So if you want to say that Father Dan is more of a success, when I am around, why just figure me as an ordinary plug, that keeps him contented and at the same time gets a lot out of being in his company."

"You would say that. You're just that type," said the fellow priest, "but never mind, no matter how humble you are the world is going to find out some day that Father Dan was a brilliant success, principally because his pal Father Dan kept his light hid under a bushel all his life to let his friend shine brilliantly."

That good priest, never mind who he happens to be, was right, dead right. And he had been associated with Dan and Tom long enough to be able to judge the situation.

Father Tom, despite his humble comparison, was no scrawny scrub pony with his race horse companion. Looking back now, it seems to me, Father Tom was every bit as big a success always as was Father Dan. The trouble was that people were too busy noticing the brilliance of Dan to pay any attention to the shadow that dwelt in his wake.

It began in their college days, this Damon and Pythias friendship. Dan was a brilliant pitcher on the baseball team. Big League scouts were after him, but he turned them down. The crowd went wild and the opposing team went frantic when Dan was in the box. Funny thing, though, he couldn't seem to get control or pitch a decent game unless Tom was catching. Nothing spectacular about Tom. Just a steady reliable catcher, who never lost his head, but who, on the other hand, never made a seemingly brilliant play in his life. But he could hold Dan down and somehow get the best out of him Dan was capable of giving. From second base I've watched Tom digging balls out of the air or picking them out of the dirt without a miss. The spectators used to cheer Dan. "Trying to make them bite on a bad one," they would comment when Tom leaped in the air for a high one or almost broke his back reaching for a wide one or scraped his fingers digging for a low one Dan had thrown. They never once figured Dan might be erratic and wild and Tom hid his wildness.

Same way it was in football. Dan was quarterback—got a mention on four choices by sports writers as All-American. Tom was center. Just down there in front, listening to signals, snapping them back to

Dan without a miss, digging holes in the line, making opportunities for Dan, even playing roving center and putting up interference. Dan made the end runs, scored touchdowns. But I was there at guard and I know Dan would have messed things badly if it hadn't been for Tom. Was Dan high strung and did he pick the wrong play? Tom's "Signal Over" quietly voiced would hold him steady.

Dan had a fiery temper. Tom seemed to have no spark of resentment within him. So it was Tom who kept Dan from voicing his opinion of unfair referees and umpires. So to Tom must go the credit for keeping Dan in many a game, where his seething sentiments if spoken aloud would have earned him prompt expulsion. Unfair tactics were equally distasteful to both, but Tom was inclined to resent unfair tactics by playing cleaner and harder while Dan was tempted to retort in kind.

The last game those two played on the college gridiron lingers in my mind. The opposing team were out to cripple our chief threat the All-American Dan. Dan had a streak in him, which was inclined to bear pain just so far and no farther. He never quit, but his body would sometimes collapse under the brutal hammering administered him and his brain refuse to function. I saw Dan shedding real tears as he begged Tom to let him slug the opposing halfback just once. It seems the opponent was using an old trick. Apparently the enemy was just charging Dan hard, hitting him fairly enough but hammering him at every chance with his brawny shoulders. Dan could have stood this all right, but he discovered and we verified the fact that this particular gridiron ruffian was wearing not ordinary shoulder pads, but pads of real iron. Oh yes they were covered with padding, but if you wear a pair of iron pads and hit your opponent hard enough and often enough you are bound to bruise him and render him dizzy if not entirely unconscious. Dan in that last quarter of our hardest game was "out on his feet." But he stuck in there, thanks to Tom. It was Tom who whispered the plays and directed the team, though Dan called signals that meant nothing. Dan swayed on his feet, and no wonder, he had taken more punishment than a normal human frame can ordinarily stand. But Tom with his quiet voice seemed to put new heart into him. "Only five minutes to go, Dan," would be his word. "Nothing to nothing but we're going to win." And his voice seemed to be driving Dan on more than brain or muscle of his own. "Two minutes and

twenty yards. Then comes glory, Dan old dear. Now let them have it. Come Dan X—Twenty Two. It's time for it. Two minutes—twenty yards then comes glory. Come on Dan over the line together we go." And over the line they went together.

Such was the end of that game. Strange to say, that was also the end of their big game of life. How typically American was that end. Oh yes, they prayed of course. But a native Christian, who was hidden in the crowd, not understanding, told with wonderment how Father Dan, who was apparently weakening and about to cry out to their torturers for mercy, lifted his head and smiled, smiled, smiled to the very end, as his brother priest kept calling a strange invocation and exhortation to the semiconscious man: "Come on Dan. Stick it out. Two minutes to go. Then comes glory." Over and over again the worshipping though amazed Christians heard their chief calling that strange prayer: "Stick it out, Dan. Two minutes to go. Then comes glory."

We can't bear to paint those last hours of Fathers Dan and Tom. It was Dan who got into trouble first. Reckless and daring he had gone into dangerous territory and neglected to take due precautions against capture. Father Tom got the news that Dan had fallen into the hands of the persecutors. So he himself ventured into the danger zone, hoping against hope to save his pal. His scheme for liberation had almost succeeded. Not quite though, and he himself fell captive. Later on came a chance for one of them to escape. Father Tom urged Father Dan to take it. Dan who was in no wise eager for martyrdom accepted. But he was hardly safely away till he became ashamed of himself and decided to risk everything on a daring attempt to save Father Tom. He failed and fell again into the hands of his enemies.

Father Tom, on the other hand, had longed for all the years of his service in China for martyrdom. He was already under the torture when they led Dan back into his presence. He laughed. "Dan, old boy," said he, "I win the race into Heaven. This is one time you can't beat me." Poor old Father Dan sobbed aloud. "Gee, Tom, but it will be double torture for me to watch you suffer." Then came the incident we mentioned in the very beginning of this narrative. St. John in sight of the goal, stepped aside and let St. Peter go before him. So Father Tom stepped aside and yielded place to Father Dan. At least he tried to. He taunted his executioners, telling them that now they had captured a real hero, one whom their most cruel tortures could not

cause to utter even a groan. The Chinese pagan chief laughed. "We shall see what we see," said he and promptly ordered Father Dan to be bound to a stake, side by side with Father Tom. Two days their torture lasted and when every fiber of their beings was crying out in agony, the brutal captors led them to the last and most dire torture of all. Father Dan was a pitiable sight. Father Tom evidently feared he would collapse physically and mentally and thus afford a spectacle to the pagans that they could ridicule for years to come. The ordinary prayers and exhortations addressed by Father Tom to his comrade evidently did not pierce the numbed consciousness of his friend. He was "out on his feet" was Father Dan, as in that football game so many years ago. I just feel somehow that's what made the end of that martyrdom so heroic. I can look across the land and sea to China and picture those last desperate moments, that martyrdom, so unorthodox, yet so heroic in its ending. Father Dan wavering, half-conscious, weakening, about to break down and show the old pitiful temperamental collapse. Then Father Tom smiling, in spite of his pain and starting that old encouraging battle cry "Two more minutes to go, Dan old boy. Then comes glory." Through deadened consciousness to the bowed head and faltering brain pierce those words reminding Dan of the long ago. Again good old reliable Tom chants, chants conquering his own pain and weakness, "Two more minutes to go, Dan old boy. Then comes glory. Come on, Danny, boy. Over the line we go together." The curly head of Dan raises; the nostrils dilate, breathing in deeply the breath of boyhood battle. "Over the line—over the line—Tom and Dan go together." And the amazed pagans saw them laugh, as death closed down upon them to a last gasped "Two minutes to go, Danny. Then comes glory."

Oh yes, we have just sung a glad "Te Deum" for our martyrs, but as for myself, if I could check my tears, I would go right out into the chapel and give our college yell of victory.

Man is like a tack—useful if he has a head on him and is pointed in the right direction, but even though he is driven he can only go as far as his head will let him.

If styles of undress continue in vogue, we may have to ask the missionaries to return the clothing we sent them for the naked savages.



Archconfraternity OUR MOTHER OF PERPETUAL HELP

The Story of Perpetual Help CHAP. IX. THE AUTHOR OF PERPETUAL HELP

C. A. SEIDEL, C.Ss.R.

Praised for his inventive genius, our author is none the less honored for his masterful workmanship, his skillful execution of so sublime a theme. But here we prefer to bring forth the testimony of others, and let them speak for us. Critics as they are, their words ought to convince those who see nothing particularly artistic in Perpetual Help, that it is really a genuine work of art, and its artist a master. "According to the opinion of Father Bigarelli, S.J.," writes G. Zocchi, a Roman painter, "I can assert that the Madonna venerated at San Alfonso's is a work of art, and of feeling, which render it a Picture of superior quality." Dom Andre Basquin, O.S.B., acclaims our Picture as "a perfect specimen of the pictures of the Greco-Russian School," and declares that it "is one of the most characteristic masterpieces of that class of Marian representations, which deserves to be pondered over with great care." At the sight of an authentic copy of Perpetual Help, E. Guillaume, director of the French Academy of Arts at Rome, immediately exclaimed: "How beautiful!" Another art connoisseur, A. Vermare, calls attention to a particular feature in our Picture, which the careless observer is very apt to overlook. "There is a detail in your Picture," he says, "which is quite remarkable, and which, in default of other proofs, would, because of the extreme difficulty of its accomplishment, stamp it as the work of a master. This detail is the foreshortening of the sole of the Infant's foot; a piece of work so highly successful that it evidences a profound knowledge of foreshortening—one of the most difficult tasks to perform in painting." Speaking of a painting by Andreas Rico de Candia, which is admittedly inferior to ours, Professor Frothingham of Princeton says:

"Rico's painting is of sufficient importance to merit careful study, for it is, perhaps, the most beautifully executed of the early portable Byzantine paintings in Italy." How much more true is this of Perpetual Help!

Another argument of no small importance in favor of our author's power of execution, is to be discovered in the fact that he painted our Picture not in oils, but in tempera or water-colors, a kind of painting which is very difficult and exacting, and generally employed only by the masters. Michaelangelo—that prince of painters—did but a solitary picture in oils, and his reason he gives in these immortal words: "Oil painting is an art for children!" Add to this the astonishing fact that our Picture triumphantly resisted for so many centuries the corroding tooth of time that generally gnaws to destruction even the best of works; and one is ready to admit that the author of Perpetual Help must have possessed exceptional abilities as an artist.

But artistic abilities are worthless unless inspired by noble sentiments. Only a pious painter can paint a pious picture. That is the doctrine of the great Ruskin, perhaps the world's foremost critic on painting. He contends that a thoroughly bad man cannot become a supremely good artist. In harmony with this opinion ring the words of Henry James who wrote: "There is a point at which the moral sense and the artistic sense lie very near together; that is, in the light of the very obvious truth that the deepest quality of a work of art will always be the quality of the mind of the producer." I repeat his last words—"the deepest quality of a work of art will always be the quality of the mind of the producer"—that quality I hold to be both in Perpetual Help and in its producer—deep-seated piety. This is readily confirmed by the pious emotions that flame up in the hearts of the faithful who devoutly pray before the Picture; and surely no one will assert that an artist can put into a picture emotions which he himself does not experience. Well did the ancient seer understand this when he said: "If you wish me to weep, you must first weep yourself." Mindful of this, the above-mentioned G. Zocchi wrote "that the Madonna of San Alfonso's is a work which opens up to us the heart of the author himself; he was, no doubt, of a religious turn of mind, and perhaps even possessed of the gift of inspiration." Of him we can say, as was said of Fra Angelico: "This holy genius prayed while he painted, and painted while he prayed." And perhaps this was the prayer he prayed—a prayer so strongly recommended to the painters of his time:

"O Jesus, Who, though God, didst in an unspeakable manner assume flesh from Mary, the Virgin, for the salvation of the World, and Who didst enlighten by Thy Holy Spirit Thine Apostle and Evangelist, St. Luke, in order that he might be enabled to paint the picture of thy most chaste Mother, carrying Thee as a Child in her arms; O Thou who art God and Lord of all, enlighten and illumine the heart and mind of thy servant, and direct his hand that he may depict in a becoming and worthy manner Thine image and the image of Thy most chaste Mother, unto Thine own glory, unto the honor of Thy most holy Church, and unto the remission of the sins of those who, while venerating and reverently saluting the portrait, transfer this honor to its Prototype, through the intercession of Thy most holy Mother, of Thy glorious Apostle and Evangelist, Luke, and of all the Saints. Amen."

As to the Grecian origin and spirit, rather than Latin or Italian, of our artist we present the following significant facts. No picture is so Byzantine, and, therefore, so Grecian, as ours. We are well aware that many Italian artists of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries freely imitated Byzantine styles of painting, such as Giunta de Pisa, Guido de Siena, Cimabue, and Giotto; but we repeat—none of these works breathes such a Byzantine spirit as our own Picture of Perpetual Help. This Grecian or Byzantine spirit accompanies Perpetual Help from its very birth, being descended, as we have previously stated, from that most celebrated picture of the East, the Hodegetria of St. Luke. Its letters are Greek; the original inscription explaining the Picture's meaning is Greek; Greek, too, is its cross with its three transverse bars; and finally, to the Greeks, both Orthodox and Uniate, our Picture was ever most dear and a thing of great delight. Most likely is it, then, that Perpetual Help was originally the work of a Grecian artist, and only after some years was it adopted by a Latin or Italian painter. Hence, with a keen sense of joy do we conclude that the West, even as of old it received from the East the Son of God Himself, received also from the East the Mother of God in her beautiful Picture of Perpetual Help.

Many, it is true, speak of Western touches in our Picture, as, for instance, Lunardi, when he writes: "The Picture of the Madonna of Perpetual Help shows an original type—with Western or more properly 'Italian' elements." In another place he asserts yet more boldly: "It can be taken for granted that it has had for its author an artist of Italian birth and thought." And Beissel likewise writes: "The Picture

of Perpetual Help was painted by a Greek who seems to have been strongly influenced by Italian art." Lastly, Diehl claims that the "Cretan School imitated freely Italian art." Just what these Italian elements are, is very difficult to determine; we leave the verdict to more enlightened judges.

We close this paper with an ingenious hypothesis, as to the origin and author of our Picture, thought out by the learned Fr. Henze, C.Ss.R. Intensely interesting, we hope it is not entirely devoid of truth.

Perhaps some Greek monk was deeply pained at the thought that the reunion between the Roman and Greek Churches in 1274, at the Second Council of Lyons, lasted for so short a time, and desirous of effecting through our Lady and her Son a permanent, unbreakable union, painted this Picture of Perpetual Help, in which he aptly portrayed the sorrow of our common Mother at her children's disobedience, and the sufferings endured by her Son for the sins of man. In the falling slipper he painted a warning and an admonition; a warning, lest by their continued disobedience to Christ's Vicar on earth, they fall like the slipper, away from Christ Himself; an admonition that, recognizing the danger of their position, they might return quickly to their Father's house. Painted, as we believe, toward the close of the thirteenth or at the beginning of the fourteenth century, it clearly shows traces of the two devotions then so popular among the people, due in no small measure to the influence of the Crusades and the preaching of the Sons of St. Francis, namely, the devotion to Christ's Passion and to our Lady's Seven Dolors.

Whoever the artist may have been, may our dear Mother of Perpetual Help heap blessings upon him; and may she inspire others, as long as the world shall endure, to paint, not on canvass or wood, but on the fibers of the human heart her holy Picture of Perpetual Help, and the soul-saving lessons it contains.

AMERICA'S GREATEST NOVENA

Back in November, 1927, a service to Our Mother of Perpetual Help was conducted in the church of St. Alphonsus at New Orleans and about three hundred faithful attended.

On a recent Tuesday twenty services were conducted with an attendance well over thirty thousand.

And each Tuesday since the beginning of the special devotions to Our Mother under the attractive title of Perpetual Help the great church has been packed—with the overflow being taken care of in St. Mary's church across the street.

Fully 1,500,000 persons have worshipped at these great demonstrations of faith in Mary's intercession since that November day a year and a half ago.

From dawn till late at night on Tuesdays both the churches are packed with thousands of faithful seeking favors from God through the intercession of Our Mother of Perpetual Help; favors that have been granted to others; favors that are sought for soul and body; favors personal or for others. In the early morning the housewives, who have to take an hour for their prayer before their daily toil begins, and the workingman on his way to the place of his employment are to be found there. Later in the day those come in throngs who have more leisure and whose tasks do not call them out so early. Through the entire day all types and nationalities can be seen wending their way in to pray and to attend the devotions of that hour. And in the evening again that splendid spectacle of many overalled men, many women in shawls, many mothers bearing their infants in arms all hastening in to pray and to be prayed for.

Throughout the services of the "greatest novena in the history of the world" impress with the wonder of its power over the faithful. Faces are lighted with hope aflame and one cannot but see the great devotion of the suppliants.

Out of the great church pour the throngs of the devout clients of Mary with rosaries and medals in their hands—and in their hearts Faith. Here the boy of seven who a few months ago was unable to walk. There a man who will tell you that he had been near blindness, with doctors unable to bring back his sight. He made the great Novena—and now his sight is returning rapidly. Nine Tuesdays had he attended.

There are thousands of letters in the files of the Redemptorist convent in New Orleans telling of miraculous favors granted by Our Mother of Perpetual Help. Stories of illness cured, of material problems solved, of harmony brought into lives torn by discord, stories of the lame made to walk and of the blind made to see.

The story of the woman struck by an automobile and reported by

doctors as fatally injured. Two hours did they give her to live. Prayers to Our Mother of Perpetual Help—and the woman is healthy and strong. There is too, the story of the man who lost his position and was unable to find other work. The family was near destitution. The faithful wife made the nine Tuesdays—and then came the unexpected offer of a position paying more money than the man had ever earned before.

Such temporal favors are granted to show the suppliant client of Mary what may be expected in the line of spiritual favors through heartfelt prayer and deep faith.

The Confraternity of Our Lady of Perpetual Help and St. Alphonsus flourishes in those parishes of New Orleans.

The aim of the Confraternity is to serve and honor the Queen of Heaven under the beautiful title of Mother of Perpetual Help and to try to get others to do likewise.

To secure for one's self and for others the grace of final perseverance.

To have recourse to Our Mother of Perpetual Help in all spiritual difficulties especially in moments of temptation and suffering.

To fly to Our Mother of Perpetual Help also in temporal needs and to appeal to her motherly heart for aid—appeal with confidence.

This is the reason for the Great Novena; this is the story of the manifestation of Faith so great that even non-Catholics are astounded. These are the reasons for the million and a half people at one church in the course of only a few months. This is why there are twenty services every Tuesday to accommodate the devout clients of Mary in the city of New Orleans.

IN GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Dear Director: Three weeks ago I asked our Blessed Lady that I might hear from an absent son whom I had not heard from in sixteen months. Many thanks to our Blessed Mother. A letter came on the day after our Mother's day, May 9th.

I enclose an offering. I promised I would make it known that others might have more love, faith and confidence in her intercession."

Dear Father: I had prayed for a year and put a petition in the Mother of Perpetual Help box every month for the conversion of a young man. My prayers were heard; he went to Mass every Sunday and went to Holy Communion some few times.

This young man was taken sick two months ago, was operated on and died about two weeks after. He died a very peaceful and happy death. Thanks to Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

* * *

"For nearly two years my husband could not hold a position on account of a dislocated shoulder. I began a Novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Help and also another to the Blessed Mother at the Lourdes Grotto. Now his shoulder is completely cured and he has had several positions which he has held. For this I give thanks to Our Lady. I give the enclosed small contribution for a Mass of thanksgiving.

"I am now making another Novena that he may get another position which I know Our Lady will grant.

"I have been attending the Tuesday Novena Devotions in honor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help ever since the 7:30 services began.

"On July 31st (1928) I awoke in the morning with a severe pain in my right eye and I suffered intensely with it all day. After my work, I tried home remedies and rest, but got no relief. Next day I called on an eye specialist. He said I had an infected eye and began very rigid treatment to try to save the eye. He gave me very little encouragement as a result of treatment.

"I am a bookkeeper and cashier and with my eyesight impaired I would not be able to take care of my father and mother and myself.

In my distress I begged Our Mother of Perpetual Help to relieve my suffering and to cure me so that I might still retain my position.

"After three weeks of daily visits to the doctor, and two weeks of rest from my work and constant home-treatment, my eyes—the left had also become infected—began to improve.

"The doctor said it was something beside his treatment that brought about the cure. I know full well that Our Lady of Perpetual Help cured me. I shall always thank her for this wonderful favor.

"Many thanks for the Blessing of the Sick which I received whilst suffering. Also I thank the congregation for their prayers. I enclose money for a Mass of thanksgiving."—(New Orleans.)

"During the holidays last Christmas a man lay in St. Mary's Hospital at the point of death. The doctors and nurses had but slight hopes of his recovery from a very necessary operation. His whole system had been poisoned by a septic condition of the throat. Naturally he was in a nervous strain of worry and excitement. He placed himself under the care of the Mother of Perpetual Help whose picture he kept before him on the dresser at the foot of his bed. He prayed to her often and fervently and his unbounded trust in her gave him courage and confidence. He underwent not only one operation but six—all performed on his throat.

"Some time in February of this year he came to the Shrine to offer most hearty thanksgivings to Our Mother of Perpetual Help. Not only had his life been spared, but his health is the best it has been in many years. He has gained weight, can eat well, is able to walk about and can talk without any pain, though the voice is still somewhat husky.

"The Sisters, the doctors and nurses are all enthusiastic about this cure and with him they attribute the complete success of the operations and his remarkable recovery to Our Mother of Perpetual Help."—(St. Louis.)

* * *

The following letter is from a grateful mother:

"Enclosed please find \$2.00. I wish to give this offering in thanksgiving to Our dear Mother of Perpetual Help for her help and blessings. My wish to have a son was granted. And my delivery was almost miraculous. Please continue to pray for me and my little son."

The incident to which this good woman refers is as follows: Whilst awaiting the time of her confinement she was held up and robbed of about two hundred dollars. The robber slugged her and for three days she was unconscious. After recovering consciousness hemorrhages threatened her life. And the doctors concluded that her child would never be born alive. She has three girls and so wanted a boy. Thanks to her confidence and her devotion, the Mother of Perpetual Help interceded for her so powerfully that she recovered, the child was born without complications for mother or child, and it is a boy.—(Ed.)

Catholic Anecdotes

A PRAYER, A GENERAL AND A BISHOP

Father Mannix, in his book *The American Convert Movement*, tells the following story:

There were two brothers, deeply attached to each other and interested in each other's well-being. The one, before graduation from West Point had so sufficiently informed himself on Catholic matters from books which an old Irish woman left at the training school, that, two years later, he was baptized. The other, the younger, graduated from the famous Kenyon College a few years later, and paid the elder a visit shortly after. While passing a Catholic Church on one of their walks, the man in uniform invited his brother, the prospective Anglican minister, to enter.

They soon reached an altar before which shone a lighted lamp.

"Let us pray here," said the lieutenant, "in the Real Presence, for two graces: the gift of light to know the truth and the grace to follow it."

And with this he knelt down. Sylvester, the younger, also knelt as a matter of courtesy to his brother, but by no means to pray. He gazed around for a while, but, not being in the habit of kneeling long at a time, and his knees aching, he turned to look at his brother whom he found absorbed in prayer. The sight was too much for Sylvester.

"Wretch that I am," he said to himself, "while this truly good man is so earnestly interesting himself with heaven for my soul's salvation, I am indifferent, as if it were none of my business. God is everywhere, and therefore also here; I, too, will pray for light and strength."

The first was the hero of Iuka, Corinth and Stone River,—Major General William Starke Rosecrans. The other, became the first Bishop of Columbus, The Rt. Rev. Sylvester Horton Rosecrans, D.D.

The hardest job a Catholic child faces is learning to be a good Catholic without the good example of its parents.

Success has a habit of coming around while you are busy.

THE TALE OF A GOLDFISH

Once upon a time, tells J. W. Holland, there was a shiny little goldfish. His crystal aquarium was his world. It had colored shells, and pebbles, and gravel. It was, in fact, the finest aquarium he had ever seen, and, he believed the biggest body of water there ever was.

He gauged the world by his own glass cell, and thought himself the most beautiful, and wisest, and richest little fish in all the wide world.

One day the owner of the little goldfish slipped into the aquarium a lovely, delicate, Japanese fantail fish. It floated in the water like a poet's fancy.

The face of the American fish fell. He said: "Who are you and where did you come from?"

"I came from lovely Japan," answered the foreign beauty.

"Where is Japan?" asked the American beauty.

"It is so far away that it makes me dizzy to think about it," replied the fantail.

The goldfish swam across the little pool, and back, and then said: "Is Japan as far as across my aquarium?"

"It is many million times farther. The ocean that I saw is so large that this water is not even a drop in comparison."

By this time the goldfish was furious with rage. He snapped out:

"You are an intruder here. You came to tell me of something that I know is a lie. There isn't any Japan, nor any ocean, or I would have known about them."

That is the way some people who accept only the things they can see and feel and measure, think about this world of ours. And when Our Saviour speaks about other worlds, their answer is the same as that of the goldfish:

There isn't any, or I would have known all about it!"

On rising from bed every morning, St. Philip Neri used to say: "O Lord, keep thy hand this day over Philip, or Philip will betray Thee!"

Time spent in feeling bad is time wasted.

Pointed Paragraphs

COMMENCEMENT

A mind stored with valuable knowledge and trained to think—a character whose formation is well and solidly begun and given the right support to grow to perfection—a heart deeply imbued with the Catholic Faith, the guiding principle and source of true ideals: such is the product of the Catholic School as the school doors close upon childhood and heavy doors open on life.

It is a momentous day.

Our Lord from the tabernacle must look upon the young men and women who knock at the portals of life with feelings akin to those that welled up in His human heart when He sent His Apostles out into the wide world to preach His gospel to every creature.

Will these carry His teaching into the world and exemplify it in their lives?

Upon them rests this great responsibility. He expects it of them. Will they disappoint Him or will they bring pleasure to His Sacred Heart?

VOICES AND A VOICE

Upon many a stage they stand, some proud night this month of June, radiant with enthusiasm and excitement, the object of general admiration and of deepest interest to their parents:—Our Graduates.

Their school days are over. Like soldiers equipped for battle, they are ready to enter upon life.

What will they do with it?

Jesus in the Tabernacle is more deeply interested than any other. He is asking the same question.

Many voices are calling them,—the voice of family,—the voice of the world,—the voice of friends,—the voice of pleasure. And through the din comes a still, small voice,—the voice of the Saviour.

One day a young man came to Him as he passed along the highways

of Judea, asking the all-important question: "Master, what must I do to enter eternal life?"

"Keep the Commandments," said the Master.

The young man answered that he had always kept them faithfully. But he felt that there were higher heights within the reach of manhood. So he pursued: "What further is wanting to me?"

Ah, here was one out of many, one with generous soul, one who would understand Him.

"If thou woudst be perfect," said the Master with a look of ineffable wistfulness,—“go, sell what thou hast and give to the poor, and come and follow Me.”

"Follow Me!" That same invitation He extends to that army of graduates. He points to the schools and institutions of learning, to the hospitals, the orphanages, asylums of every kind that require generous self-sacrificing souls; He points to the churches in need of priests; He points to the wide mission fields at home and abroad that are clamoring for missionaries.

Come! He whispers. It is a call for volunteers. Who shall answer?

JUNE BRIDES

A wedding in the Church . . . orange blossoms . . . a smiling bride in a filmy veil . . . a blushing, bashful groom . . . congratulations and well-wishing . . . feasting and rejoicing . . . a honeymoon of happiness. Then—settling down to the god-like task—the life-long task of founding a home!

They say marriages are made in heaven. Surely the angels rejoice there when they are made, thinking, as they must, of the new home being formed on earth, of future souls to be born whom they can guard and watch and lead and help; of new companions that they may some day gain in heaven from the life-work the gay young couple begin on their wedding day!

But sometimes, I think, the angels are sad when marriages are made in heaven. In an age that boasts of its independence—that has made marriage over according to its own ideas—casting aside like a worn-out garment the commands God has placed around it—the angels must think of the odds that are against the happy couple that kneel together

at the altar on a bright June day. How shall they make the home God has destined them to build?

Shall divorce or birth-control or infidelity make of this marriage a mockery in heaven? . . . God forbid!

WHAT SOME PROTESTANTS THINK OF HEFLIN

"It is about time," writes B. McCleane in a letter to the Chicago Tribune, "that Senator Heflin was placed in a padded cell or exiled to Fiji Islands, for he is not only bringing disgrace upon the Protestant people as a whole, but belittling us to the extent that we are almost ashamed to admit we are Protestants."

They are strong words—but, we may add, not too strong for the situation. "We can well understand," comments the Editor of the Catholic Citizen regarding them, "that feeling among Protestants. Imagine our feelings if a Catholic in public life would specialize in attacking Protestants and Protestantism on every occasion. We would regard him as a nuisance to be quickly abated. The Majority of Protestants disapprove of Heflin, but we must not be oblivious to the fact that he has an element of support in the South. Senator Simmons of North Carolina, for instance."

AN UNKIND WORD AND A KING

There is a story of Louis XIV, who, in company with his courtiers, began an amusing narrative, and then abruptly ended.

After one of the courtiers had left the circle, the King remarked that it had just occurred to him that the point of the story was a reflection upon one of the nobleman's ancestors, and that he preferred to suppress a good jest rather than risk wounding the feelings of an estimable man.

The rabbins say that the angels bow before the man who can repress a witty but unkind story.—Ave Maria.

Of all things in the world the responsibility of parentage is at once the greatest and the least regarded.—W. T. Stead.

Most worry about posterity lacks sincerity.

Wink at others' small faults; remember, thou hast great ones.

Catholic Events

In the hope that a conference between the representatives of the Catholic Church and the Mexican Government might bring about a settlement of the three-year controversy between the Church and the State and restore peace in Mexico, members of the Diplomatic Corps in Mexico City are centering their efforts on arranging a meeting between Provisional President Portes Gil and the exiled Archbishop Leopoldo Ruiz y Flores, who is now in Washington.

The Mexico City press is unanimous in expressing editorially its wish that a settlement of the religious troubles in the country might grow out of the public statements made by the President and Archbishop Ruiz, in which each indicated a willingness to confer on the differences between Church and State.

Action on the part of the Diplomatic Corps followed publication of the statements made by the President and Archbishop Ruiz in which both declared there existed no insurmountable obstacles to the conclusion of such an agreement.

Conditions of trade throughout Mexico are constantly growing worse and it is for this reason that the diplomats of foreign countries are anxious to see an early settlement of the disturbing religious question. The unsatisfactory conditions of trade in Mexico are seriously affecting the business of those countries which make large shipments of various products of this country.

The Mexican government is responsible to some extent for the growing business depression, having recently increased the tariffs on a considerable number of products. Among the articles on which tariffs have been increased are drugs and advertised medicines that have had large sales in Mexico.

Failure of some American business firms to pay the increased tariff after shipment of their goods had arrived in Mexican ports has caused congestion in these ports and consequent loss to shippers and Mexican retailers.

It seems to be generally agreed that there is no possibility of restoring normal trade conditions until the religious question is settled and peace re-established.

Opinion in Mexico City is that there is certain to be an early meeting between President Portes Gil and representatives of the Church, and it is freely predicted that a settlement of existing difficulties will be reached.

* * *

Previous to this Archbishop Leopoldo Ruiz, who is visiting friends in Washington and who is the senior of the Mexican Hierarchy and chairman of the committee of Mexican Bishops, gave the following statement:

"The religious conflict in Mexico arises from no cause that cannot be corrected by men of sincere good will. As an evidence of good will the words of President Portes Gil are most important. The Church and her ministers are prepared to cooperate with him in every just and moral effort made for the improvement of the people.

"Not able in conscience to accept laws that are enforced in my country, the Catholic Church in Mexico, not willfully, but as a solemn duty, has found it necessary to completely suspend all acts of public worship.

"With sincere respect I ask the government of my country to reconsider existing legislation, in a spirit of sincere patriotism and good will, to the end that steps be taken to remove the confusion between religion and politics, and prepare the way for an era of true peace and tranquillity.

"Should there arise any seemingly insurmountable difficulty to prevent this action, the logical solution would be found in submission of disputed points to specially authorized representatives of the Church and of the Government of Mexico as has been done with such excellent results in similar controversies.

"In Mexico the Catholic Church asks no privilege. She asks only that, on the basis of an amicable separation of Church and State, she be permitted that liberty which is indispensable to the wellbeing and happiness of the nation.

"The Catholic citizens of my country, whose faith and patriotism cannot be challenged, would wholeheartedly accept whatever settlement might be concluded between the Church and the Government of Mexico.

"God hasten the day, when as Mexicans, united, we may again labor together to make effective the three guarantees upon which rests our life as an independent nation:

"Union—that holy union in which brother will respect the rights and opinions of brother;

"Religion—that religion which our forefathers professed and through the free exercise of which the happiness of our nation will be assured;

"Independence—that patriotism in which devotion to our country knows no bounds but those which spring from respect for the rights of others."

* * *

In an article entitled "The First Agreement between Italy and the Holy See," published in the *Saturday Evening Post*, Vittorio E. Orlando, former Premier of Italy, reveals negotiations for the settlement of the Roman Question carried on between him and representatives of the Vatican at the time of the Paris Peace Conference in 1919.

In the article, Signor Orlando reveals that the negotiations resulted from a suggestion made by the Rt. Rev. Francis C. Kelley, Bishop of Oklahoma, who was then Msgr. Kelley, president of the Catholic Church Extension Society of the United States.

Signor Orlando, in his article, merely refers to a Monsignor K., an "American prelate of Chicago." But the N.C.W.C. News Service is able to state that this Monsignor K. was Bishop Kelley of Oklahoma.

When recently former Governor Alfred E. Smith received the Laetare Medal at the hands of Cardinal Hayes, a letter from President Hoover congratulating Mr. Smith, was read. It was addressed to Rev. Charles O'Donnell, President of Notre Dame University, by whom the medal is bestowed. The letter read:

"My dear Dr. O'Donnell: I have your letter of the 22nd, informing me that the Laetare medal from the University of Notre Dame will on the 5th of May be awarded to Governor Alfred E. Smith.

"I am glad you have given me the opportunity to join in congratulations to Gov. Smith for the honor which you confer on so distinguished an American, and to the university for its public spirit in honoring so great a public servant.

Yours faithfully,

Herbert Hoover."

* * *

Word has been received from Rome that Rev. Louis Willinger, C.Ss.R., at present connected with St. Mary's College, North East, Pa., has been appointed Bishop of the Diocese of Ponce, in Porto Rico.

Bishop-elect Willinger is 43 years old. Since his ordination to the priesthood, he has been one of the foremost Redemptorist missionaries, having given missions in English, German and Spanish. He labored in Porto Rico for six years and is well acquainted with conditions there.

* * *

The Catholic Church counts one more Negro ruler within her ranks. Ruhinda, Sultan of Ihangiro, Tanganyika Territory, East Africa, has enrolled himself for regular catechetical instructions. He is following the example of his wife, the Princess Maria, who embraced the faith last September after her sojourn in the Hospital conducted at Kashozi by the White Sisters.

Sultan Ruhinda is regarded highly by the authorities of the British Government in Tanganyika, and is noted for administrative ability and judiciary competence.

The territory of Tanganyika includes a population of approximately 420,000 souls, of whom 29,000 are Catholics. The White Fathers are in charge.

* * *

The Priestley Medal, highest honor of American chemistry, will be awarded to Francis P. Garvan, of New York, President of the Chemical Foundation and noted Catholic Layman. The award, in recognition of his part in building up the chemical industry in the United States since the World War, was decided upon at a meeting of the Council of the American Chemical Society.

* * *

China now has a Catholic Daily paper, printed in the Chinese tongue, called "Ichepao." It carries both secular and missionary news, as well as articles on religious subjects. Its editor, a fervent Christian, says that he hopes to enroll 300,000 subscribers in China and possibly 150,000 in Siam.

Some Good Books

The Life of Christ. A Historical, Critical and Apologetic Exposition. By V. Rev. L. C. Fillion, S.S. Translated by Rev. Newton Thompson, S.T.D. Vol. II. Published by B. Herder, St. Louis. 1928. 719 pages. Price \$4.00.

We have in a former issue reviewed the first volume and given it unstinted praise. The second is a worthy continuation of the work in every way. It is a most satisfactory treatment of the Public Life of Our Lord. While not going into minute details or critical difficulties, one is made to feel at all times that full account is taken of them. Read, for instance, the chapter on Christ's Messianic Consciousness, on His Miracles, on the Promise of the Eucharist, etc. There are beautiful general surveys of Christ's preaching, of His Miracles, of His Parables. There are brief but telling descriptions of the human personality of Christ and of His Apostles. The very soberness and calmness of the treatment carries conviction to the reader.

The book ought to be in every priest's library. School teachers will find it an inexhaustible source of inspiration and information. Its bulk may prevent its ever becoming as popular among the laity as Abbé Fouard's book; yet, we would wish that as many as possible could get it into their hands.

The School of Suffering. A Companion Book to "More Joy." By Rt. Rev. Paul W. von Keppler. Translated by August F. Brockland. B. Herder, St. Louis, 1929. 189 pages. Price \$1.50.

"Here on earth," says the author in his preface, "when one speaks of joy he also speaks of grief; if one speaks of life, one likewise speaks of suffering." It is needless to repeat, the Cross comes into every life. We must be grateful, then, to anyone who tells us how to meet it and bear it. Bishop Keppler does this in a masterly way. He appeals to mind and heart, and any sufferer will find in these pages light and comfort and courage. There are short chapters and long ones: there are

days when we can stand a longer lesson and days when a brief word can bring tears or resolutions.

Keep it near you: one never can tell when sorrow will come.

Five-Minute Sermons. Short Talks on Life's Problems. Second Series. By Rev. J. Elliot Ross, Paulist. B. Herder, St. Louis. 1928. 313 pages. Price, \$2.00.

Father Ross's name stands out among Catholic preachers in our country; it is in itself a guarantee of merit.

In this volume he gives us a hundred sermons divided into seven series: Faith, Christ, The Church, The Our Father, Aspects of Revealed Religion, the Natural Virtues, and School and family. In a special table he gives an arrangement of the sermons for the ecclesiastical year.

The average length of the sermons is two and a half pages—which shows he was in earnest when he called them Five-Minute Sermons. Brief as they are they are meaty: at least one clear point is carried home in each sermon.

Evidently the author has not striven for eloquence; but only for clearness, common sense and conviction; for this reason, while the book appeals directly to the priest, it would be read with great interest by every thoughtful Catholic.

With Saints and Sages. A Book of Reflections and Prayers. Compiled and edited by Rev. F. X. Lasance. Published by Benziger Brothers, New York. Price, \$2.50 and upwards.

The title suggests correctly the nature of this prayer-book size book; but not the wealth of material for reflection and prayer which it offers.

Marry Your Own. A discussion of Mixed Marriage. By Daniel A. Lord, S.J. Published by The Queen's Work, St. Louis. Price, 10c.

A very interesting discussion about a very important matter. We need a few more of a similar kind to meet the different mentalities of the young people who say: "But my friend is charming!"

Some Good Books

Flowers of the Soul. Daily Thoughts for Religious Women. By Canon Reyna. Published by P. Herder, St. Louis, 1929. 249 pages. Price \$2.00.

The book was written for our Sisters. The preface makes this clear. It is not to serve as a meditation book nor for spiritual reading. It is meant to give them a thought for each day of the year; it is meant to be taken up at some quiet moment just for the sake of facing a vividly put truth—almost like a visit to the Blessed Sacrament. Often there is a peculiar efficacy in such an experience. Try it.

A Modern Martyr. Theophane Vénard (Blessed). Revised and annotated by the Very Rev. James A. Walsh, M.Ap. Published by the Catholic Foreign Mission Society of America, Maryknoll, New York. Price \$1.00.

Theophane Vénard was a young priest who was martyred in Tongking, Indo-China, in 1861, at the age of thirty-two. The book has the flavor of an autobiography, for the greater part is taken from the martyr's letters to his family. It is a story that deserves a place in every bookcase which contains the *Life of the Little Flower*, for it is another "story of the soul," beautiful by its sheer simplicity. St. Therese of the Child Jesus had a great devotion to Theophane, the martyr, and said of him: "He is a little saint." Theophane Vénard was declared Blessed in 1909.

Conferences for Religious Communities. By Rev. Albert Muntsch, S.J. Published by B. Herder Book Co., St. Louis. Price, \$1.75.

There is something very refreshing about these conferences for the help and guidance of religious. They breathe the true spirit of Catholic asceticism,—not in a cold, lifeless, theoretical way, but with an intimate understanding of present day problems and trends of thought. We might venture to add that many of these conferences would make profitable and appropriate reading for people in the world as well as for religious.

Religion Teaching Plans. By Sister M. Inez, O.S.F. Published by Benziger Bros., New York., 1929. 245 pages.

The book contains sample lesson plans on a variety of "religion" subjects for various grades ranging from the First, into and through the High School. Its chief usefulness is to be found in its exemplification of practical pedagogy applied to the teaching of religion. The lessons are a record of actual school-room work.—B.A.C.

The Reign of Christ. By Joseph Husslein, S.J., Ph.D. Price, \$2.00. A scholarly yet popular and attractive treatment of the Kingship and the Kingdom of Jesus Christ which will arouse the enthusiastic response the author desires in all truly christian hearts.

The author not only establishes beyond all doubt the comforting truth that Christ is a king but he also suggests means and ways of promoting this kingdom in a world that has rejected Christ and His claims.

We highly recommend this book to all true lovers of The Divine King of ages.

The Seal of the Spirit. The Rite of Confirmation, newly translated. By the Rev. Richard E. Power. 18 pages. Published by the Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minn. Price, 5c.

God's Healing. By Rev. R. E. Power. 40 pages. Published by the Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minn. Price, 10c.

As a fruit of the liturgical movement we have here two splendid booklets. The one presents the entire rite of Confirmation, with an introductory explanation of the Sacrament; the other contains the translation of all the Last Rites which the Church confers on her children in serious illness and the moment of death. To it also is prefixed a English texts are given side by side, so that those who receive these Sacraments or attend their administration will be able to do so with greater understanding and devotion.

Lucid Intervals

"How did you find yourself after last night's party?"

"Oh, I just looked under the table, and there I was!"

An old darkey walked into a drug store and asked for a cent's worth of insect powder.

"What's that?" said the clerk; "a cent's worth? Why, that wouldn't pay for the paper and string and the time and trouble of wrapping it up."

"Who said anything 'bout wrappin' dat up?" said the darkey. "Ah wants you to take dat powder and pour it down ma back."

"Restus, which do you prefer for a Christmas present, a ton of coal or a gallon of whiskey?"

"Boss, Ah burns wood."

Rastus: Here am a telegram from de boss in Africa. He says he is sending us some lions' tails.

Circus Owner's Wife: Lions' tails, Rastus? What are you talking about?

Rastus: Well, read it yourself. It say plain: "Just captured two lions. Sending details by mail."

"An old colored man," says a minister came to me one day with the odd request that I pray for his floating kidney."

"Why Sam, I remonstrated, 'how do you expect me to pray for some particular thing like that?'"

"Wal, parson," Sam retorted, 'las' week yo all was prayin' for the loose livers."

Young Wife: "Hubby, I've made a cake which is really a poem!"

Young Husband: "I suppose I'm the waste basket."

Frank Wilber: "Man is wonderful. He has learned to fly like a bird."

Otto Stagman: "Yes, but he hasn't learned to sit on a barbed wire fence."

In a shoe store at Memphis the boss saw a Swedish clerk throw a pair of brand new shoes in the waste basket. "What's the idea of throwing those shoes away?" he asked, indignantly.

"They bane no gude," replied the clerk. "I try them on six fellers and they don't fit anyone."

Scotty MacKiltie who went to a large city to see the sights engaged a room at a hotel and before retiring asked the clerk about the hours for dining.

"We have breakfast from 6 to 11, dinner from 11 to 3 and supper from 3 to 8," explained the clerk.

"Well, say," inquired the Scotchman, in surprise, "what time am I going to get to see the town?"

Man: Say, conductor, can't you run any faster than this?

Conductor: Yes, I can, but I have to stay in the car.

Piggly: I hear they're going to import sparrows to kill worms. Don't you think sparrows are worse than worms?

Wiggly: I don't know; I never had sparrows.

Judge: "Just what did you do to prevent the collision?"

Lady Driver: "I closed my eyes and screamed as loud as I could."

Abie: Papa, vat is science?

Abie's Papa: My, how could you be so dumb! Science is dose things vat says, "No Smoking."

Click: Have you ever noticed that successful men are bald?

Clack: Naturally—they come out on top!

"Ma, if the baby was to eat tadpoles, would it give him a base voice like a frog?"

"Good gracious, no! They'd kill him."

"Well, they didn't."

Redemptorist Scholarships

A scholarship is a fund the interest of which serves for the education of a Redemptorist missionary in perpetuity.

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